

REMARKS

Claims 13, 18, 23, and 26-35 are now pending in this application for which applicants seek reconsideration.

Amendment

Independent claims 13 and 23 have been amended to improve their form, and new claims 32-35 have been added to further define the invention. No new matter has been introduced.

Art Rejection

Claims 13, 18, 23, and 26-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Swayze (USP 6,519,003). The examiner alleges that it would have been obvious for Swayze to place the switches (140, 142, 144) anywhere convenient since they are independently operable switches.

First, applicants disagree with the examiner's obviousness assessment because Swayze explicitly teaches placing the switches adjacent to the display to display the functions associated with the switches, not just anywhere. That is, if the switches were to be placed anywhere around the camera body as urged by the examiner, it would defeat the purpose of allowing the user to visually associate the switches with their functions displayed on the display. Accordingly, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have moved the switch anywhere else except adjacent to the display so that the switch functions can be readily identified.

Second, even if it would have been obvious to move the switches as urged by the examiner for argument's sake, in contrast to the examiner's assertion, Swayze fails to disclose providing both the name and the function of each switch. Indeed, Fig. 3 is telling in that it merely shows the function of the selected switch. Accordingly, applicants submit that Swayze would not have taught the claimed display. Note that, for clarity, independent claims 13 and 26 now positively define --concurrently-- displaying both the names and the functions of both switches.

Third, new dependent claims 32-35 now define the location of the display member, namely at the top or side face of the operation apparatus. See at least Figs. 1 or 8 for support. In particular, the display member located at the side face of the operation apparatus makes it easier for the user to see the display member during image taking with the zoom lens. Applicants submit that Swayze further would not have taught the features set forth in these dependent claims.

Conclusion

Applicants submit that the pending claims patentably distinguish over the applied references and are in condition for allowance. Should the examiner have any issues concerning this reply or any other outstanding issues remaining in this application, applicants urge the examiner to contact the undersigned to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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DATE

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